

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BONN 04297 01 OF 03 101607Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /058 W
-----101643Z 107832 /53

R 101554Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6350
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 04297

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, GW, GE
SUBJECT: GERMAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS HOLD NATIONAL
CONVENTION

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN TERMS OF STRENGTHENING CDU CHAIRMAN KOHL'S POSITION, THE 25TH CDU NATIONAL CONVENTION, MARCH 7-9, WAS A SUCCESS. NOT ONLY DID HE RECEIVE AN OVERWHELMING ENDORSEMENT IN TERMS OF RE-ELECTION (I.E., 95 PERCENT POSITIVE VOTES), BUT HIS CHOICE FOR SECRETARY-GENERAL, DR. HEINRICH GEISSLER, ALSO RECEIVED AN IMPRESSIVE ELECTION VICTORY. POTENTIAL RIVALS FOR
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BONN 04297 01 OF 03 101607Z

THE PARTY CHAIRMANSHIP, SUCH AS BIEDENKOPF AND DREGGER, DID WELL, BUT NOT WELL ENOUGH TO REPRESENT A THREAT TO KOHL AT THIS TIME.

THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS SCRUPULOUSLY AVOIDED DISCUSSING CURRENT POLITICAL ISSUES, SUCH AS THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM'S FINANCIAL CRISIS. A WHOLE DAY WAS DEVOTED

TO AN INTERESTING, ALBEIT ACADEMIC DISCUSSION OF INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS. THE RESOLUTION APPROVED WAS A CAREFULLY WORKED OUT DOCUMENT WHICH REPRESENTS AN ATTEMPT TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE CDU'S POLICY VIS-A-VIS THE GDR NEED NOT BE ANATHEMA TO THE FDP. ALTHOUGH NO RADICAL CHANGE IN CDU POLICY EMERGED, THE QUESTION REMAINS WHETHER HELMUT KOHL, SOLIDLY ENTRENCHED IN THE PARTY, WILL USE HIS STRENGTHENED POSITION TO TAKE A MORE FORCEFUL STAND AS OPPOSITION LEADER. HOWEVER, EVEN IF HE DOES NOT, AS MANY CDU MEMBERS FEAR, THE DUESSELDORF CONVENTION PROVED THAT THERE IS NO ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE TO THE RHEINLAND-PFAELZER AT THIS TIME. CSU CHAIRMAN STRAUSS OPTED TO VISIT TOGO RATHER THAN TO ATTEND THE PARTEITAG. END SUMMARY.

1. BY ALMOST ANY MEASURE, THE 25TH BUNDESPARTEITAG OF THE CDU, WHICH WAS HELD IN DUESSELDORF THIS WEEK, WAS A DULL AFFAIR. KOHL FACED NO CHALLENGE FOR RE-ELECTION, AND HE HAD ALREADY ARRANGED FOR AN EXPANSION IN THE NUMBER OF DEPUTY PARTY LEADERS, SO THAT NONE OF THE CANDIDATES COULD LOSE. HIS CHOICE FOR SECRETARY-GENERAL RECEIVED 746 OUT OF A POSSIBLE 812 VOTES, AND THE ELECTION OF THE TWENTY-MEMBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPRESENTED A COMPROMISE AMONG THE VARIOUS GEOGRAPHIC FACTIONS, INTEREST GROUPS, AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHIES EXISTING WITHIN THE PARTY.

2. KOHL'S OVERWHELMING RE-ELECTION (767 OUT OF 810 VOTES) WAS FAR BETTER THAN HE OR HIS ADVISORS HAD

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 BONN 04297 01 OF 03 101607Z

EXPECTED. RECENT CRITICISM OF KOHL'S LEADERSHIP FROM WITHIN THE CDU/CSU BUNDESTAG FRAKTION LED KOHL SUPPORTERS TO FEAR THAT THERE WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF NEGATIVE VOTES CAST AGAINST HIM. THEIR FEARS WERE UNFOUNDED, AND KOHL RECEIVED MORE VOTES THAN HE HAD IN 1975.

3. KOHL'S OPENING SPEECH WAS LACKLUSTER, AND HE STUCK TO GENERALITIES. HE DID HOLD OUT THE OFFER TO THE FDP FOR A COALITION AND REJECTED A GRAND COALITION WITH THE SPD. BIEDENKOPF'S SPEECH WAS MORE INTELLECTUAL AND WAS WELL RECEIVED. THE FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL, WHO IS BEGINNING A NEW POLITICAL CAREER IN NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA, DISCUSSED THE RECENT CONSTITUTIONAL COURT DECISION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT'S USE OF OFFICIAL FUNDS FOR CAMPAIGN PROPAGANDA, AND THE NEED TO RESTORE CONFIDENCE OF THE ORDINARY GERMAN CITIZENS IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS.

4. MOST OF THE DRAMA WAS TAKEN OUT OF THE ELECTION FOR
THE POSITIONS OF DEPUTY PARTY CHAIRMEN AFTER LOWER
SAXONY MINISTER-PRESIDENT DR. ERNST ALBRECHT AND PARTY
THEORETICIAN RICHARD VON WEIZSAECKER REMOVED THEMSELVES
FROM THE CONTEST. THAT LEFT EXACTLY THE SAME NUMBER OF

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BONN 04297 02 OF 03 101610Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /058 W
-----101642Z 107884 /53

R 101554Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6351
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 03 BONN 04297

CANDIDATES AS THERE WERE POSITIONS. RHEINLAND-PFALZ
CULTURAL MINISTER, DR. HANNA-RENATE LAURIEN, RECEIVED
THE MOST VOTES (731), FOLLOWED BY DR. GERHARD STOLTEN-
BERG (682), AND PROFESSOR KURT BIEDENKOPF (602). THEN
CAME HANS KATZER (598), DR. ALFRED DREGGER (570), AND
DR. HANS FILBINGER (514). NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA CDU
LEADER HEINRICH KOEPLER RECEIVED THE LEAST NUMBER OF
VOTES (512) AND UNDOUBTEDLY CAN FEEL BIEDENKOPF

BREATHING DOWN HIS NECK FOR THE TOP POSITION IN NRW.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BONN 04297 02 OF 03 101610Z

5. THE RELATIVELY WEAK PERFORMANCE BY AVOWED CONSERVATIVES, DREGER AND FILBINGER, IS AN INDICATION THAT THE CDU NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP IS MORE LIBERAL THAN THE MAJORITY OF BUNDESTAG FRAKTION MEMBERS. LEISLER KIEP, ONE OF THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL POLITICIANS IN THE PARTY, ONCE AGAIN WAS ELECTED PARTY TREASURER, ALTHOUGH 94 DELEGATES VOTED AGAINST HIM.

6. AS FAR AS THE ELECTIONS FOR PARTY OFFICES WERE CONCERNED, KOHL HAS EVERY REASON TO BE HAPPY. THE SIZE OF HIS ELECTION IS A DEMONSTRATION OF WIDESPREAD SUPPORT IN THE PARTY. IN ADDITION, THE GOOD BUT NOT OUTSTANDING SHOWING BY THE STRONGEST POTENTIAL CHALLENGER, KURT BIEDENKOPF, IS AN INDICATION THAT THE PARTY DOES NOT SEE AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE FORMER RHEINLAND-PFALZ MINISTER-PRESIDENT. ALBRECHT OR VON WEIZSAECKER, BOTH POLITICIANS WHO ARE CLOSER TO KOHL'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY THAN DREGER OR FILBINGER, PROBABLY COULD HAVE BEEN ELECTED TO A DEPUTY CHAIRMANSHIP. HOWEVER, THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN AT KOEPPLER'S EXPENSE AND WOULD HAVE CREATED SOME INTERNAL STRAINS. THERE ARE ALREADY SOME COMPLAINTS THAT A RHEINLAND-PFALZ MAFIA IS TAKING OVER THE PARTY.

7. AMONG THE ADDITIONAL 20 MEMBERS OF THE PARTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, RHEINLAND-PFALZ MINISTER-PRESIDENT BERNHARD VOGEL RECEIVED THE MOST VOTES (775), FOLLOWED BY VON WEIZSAECKER (740), WHOSE WAHLKREIS IS ALSO IN RHEINLAND-PFALZ. THERE WAS SOME RUMBLING ABOUT THE COMPOSITION OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP BY VARIOUS FACTIONS. SOME OF THE YOUNGER DELEGATES WERE UPSET THAT DR. GERD LANGGUTH WAS NOT RE-ELECTED TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. IT WAS ALSO POINTED OUT BY A PROMINENT PROTESTANT CDU POLITICIAN THAT OF THE TOP NINE POSITIONS IN THE PARTY, EIGHT ARE CATHOLICS. ALTHOUGH THE RELIGIOUS SQUABBLING THAT WAS SO PREVALENT WITHIN THE CDU IN THE POSTWAR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 BONN 04297 02 OF 03 101610Z

PERIOD HAS DIMINISHED CONSIDERABLY, IT REMAINS STILL A SENSITIVE NERVE JUST BELOW THE SURFACE.

8. THE WHOLE SECOND DAY OF THE PARTY CONVENTION WAS

DEVOTED TO THE GDR AND INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS. THREE PROMINENT ACADEMICIANS DELIVERED LENGTHY LECTURES, FOLLOWED BY A PODIUM DISCUSSION AND SPEECHES FROM THE FLOOR. THE RESOLUTION WHICH WAS PASSED BY THE CONVENTION WAS THE PRODUCT OF A CAREFULLY WORKED OUT COMPROMISE INTENDED TO SHOW A BIT MORE FLEXIBILITY THAN IN THE PAST. THAT SAID, NOTHING ACTUALLY NEW EMERGED. STATEMENTS MADE BY SWISS PROFESSOR KURT GASTEYGER, CALLING FOR SOME UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE GDR, WERE CONSIDERED BY MANY DELEGATES TO BE FAR TOO CHARITABLE. (A MORE COMPLETE REPORT ON THE INNER-GERMAN PORTION OF THE CONVENTION WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF A SEPARATE REPORT.)

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BONN 04297 03 OF 03 101628Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /058 W

-----101641Z 108140 /53

R 101615Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6352

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USBERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 03 OF 03 BONN 04297

9. ONE OF THE MORE REMARKABLE THINGS ABOUT THE CONVENTION WAS THAT THE OPPOSITION DID NOT USE THE OCCASION TO ATTACK THE GOVERNMENT FOR A WHOLE SERIES OF EMBARRASSING MISTAKES WHICH HAVE PLAGUED THE SPD/FDP COALITION. MOST DELEGATES LEFT THE CONVENTION FEELING THAT, ALL IN ALL, THE DUESSELDORF MEETING HAD BEEN LESS THAN STIMULATING.

10. THE QUESTION REMAINS AS TO WHAT KOHL WILL DO NOW.
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BONN 04297 03 OF 03 101628Z

HE IS IN A STRONGER POSITION WITHIN THE PARTY THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE HE BECAME CHAIRMAN. CLEARLY, HE HAS A MANDATE FROM THE PARTY, AND WITH A NEW SECRETARY-GENERAL WHO IS A TRUSTED CONFIDANT HE SHOULD BE IN A POSITION TO IMPOSE HIS POLICIES ON THE FRAKTION. HOWEVER, EVEN HIS SUPPORTERS ARE NOT CONVINCED THAT HE WILL SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY. THE EVIDENCE, AT LEAST UP UNTIL NOW, WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT HE WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK ACCOMMODATION RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION IN THE FRAKTION. THIS WOULD MEAN THAT THE DISAGREEMENT OVER THE MOST EFFECTIVE STRATEGY--SHOULD THE CDU SEEK ACCOMMODATION WITH THE FDP IN THE HOPE OF BRINGNG THE LBERALS AROUND BEFORE 1980, OR SHOULD THE PARTY SEEK A CLEAR-CUT CONFRONTATION IN THE HOPE OF ACHIEVING AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY IN 1980--WILL CONTINUE DESPITE KOHL'S PREFERENCE FOR THE FORMER.

STOESSEL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY MEETINGS, PARTY ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 10-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decapton Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BONN04297
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770082-1210
Format: TEL
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770375/aaaacnql.tel
Line Count: 311
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 73b8d1ba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3154724
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GERMAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS HOLD NATIONAL CONVENTION BEGIN SUMMARY: IN TERMS OF STRENGTHENING CDU CHAI
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, GE, GC, (KOHL, HELMUT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/73b8d1ba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009